

NPS newsletter



No. 14

A publication of the N.H. DES Watershed Assistance Program
Working to Prevent Nonpoint Source Pollution (NPS)

Spring 2003

Hunting for Pollution Sources in Nashua

by Andrea Donlon, DES Nonpoint Source Specialist

Last summer, Watershed Assistance staff got to know the ins and outs of Nashua from the vantage point of its rivers and streams. Our purpose was to survey all out-

nonpoint source pollution in the Merrimack River watershed, and this survey helped us identify what kinds of issues may be present in an urban area such as Nashua.

Much of our surveying was done on foot or in a canoe, but we were also given a motor boat tour of the Merrimack River, courtesy of the Nashua Wastewater Treatment Facility. For each outfall pipe that we found, we documented the location, size, material, and condition as well as other ob-



Jeff Marcoux, DES intern, collects data from Hassel Brook, in Nashua.

fall pipes, culverts, and swales within the City of Nashua that discharge into surface waters. Our efforts were designed to assist the City of Nashua in complying with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II requirements (see related article page 4) to develop and implement a plan to detect and address illicit discharges to the storm drainage system. The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services is also focusing efforts on reducing

observations related to the surroundings and water quality.

The investigations were carried out during periods of dry weather, and last summer provided lots of dry weather. Typically, stormwater pipes should not be flowing during dry weather unless a stream has been rerouted underground in an urban area. If there is no natural source, dry weather flow can indicate an illicit discharge such as

Protecting Lake Sunapee From Sand, Silt and Other Pollutants

by Robert Wood, Associate Director, Lake Sunapee Protective Association

As development pressure continues around Lake Sunapee, steps are being taken to keep the lake's water clean and healthy for drinking, recreation, and habitat. With \$37,249 in grant funds from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services Watershed Assistance Grants, the Lake Sunapee Protective Association (LSPA) is working cooperatively with the towns of Newbury, Sunapee and New London and the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (DOT) to reduce roadway runoff into the lake.

Although Lake Sunapee's water quality remains relatively high, development continues to impact the lake's water quality. Pollutants from buildings, paved roads and parking lots are carried into nearby streams, stormdrains, or culverts that lead to the lake during storms and snowmelt. Sand and finer sediments from erosion, salts, oils and other transportation related pollutants degrade water quality and the in-stream or in-lake habitat.

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Sunapee, continued on page 2

Sunapee

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LSPA initiated a project to help reduce the impact of this nonpoint source pollution. The first steps of the project included engineered plans to address six of the worst road runoff and roadside erosion problem sites around the lake: the Mount Sunapee access road, Mount Sunapee parking lot, Route 11 Georges Mills, Hastings Landing, Eagle Rock Brook, and Sunapee Harbor. The potential sites were chosen based on the following criteria:

- Area of contributing road drainage affecting the site.
- Slope of that road area (affects severity of erosion and sedimentation and generally the amount of winter sand and salt applied to the road surface).
- Visual evidence of sedimentation, runoff and erosion contributing to the impact.
- Volume of water carried by the stream (amount of water affected by the pollutants).
- Existing bank, culvert-header or wing-wall damage or instability.
- Potential for further degradation (e.g., failing or undercut wing walls).

In the second phase, LSPA along with assistance from DOT and the town highway department will install a number of best management practices (BMPs) and design improvements that should have significant positive water quality

impacts. The planned BMPs and design changes include:

- Vegetated swales
- Sediment/infiltration basins
- Culvert extension (to reduce bank slopes)
- Culvert wing-wall rebuild (stabilize slope of culvert outlet)
- Catch basin upgrades and other improvements
- Catch basin—new installations
- Runoff diversions
- Bank re-sloping

In short, the six sites and the BMPs were selected to yield the “biggest bang for the buck”—the most potential roadway runoff reduction for the effort invested. In the process, LSPA hopes to incorporate lower-cost, innovative improvements to address common runoff/pollution problems.

LSPA will report on the success of these measures and use these reports to inform and educate those involved in similar projects. We plan to



Erosion from winter sand and salt runoff along Route 11 in Georges Mills.

promote the use and installation of successful measures into new or retrofit applications by other agencies and highway departments.

Watershed Assistance Grants are used for activities that address water quality impairments and are appropriated through the DES Watershed Assistance Section from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act. For more information about the Watershed Assistance Grants contact Eric Williams at (603) 271-2358 or ewilliams@des.state.nh.us.

For more information about this project, contact Robert Wood, Associate Director, LSPA at (603) 763-2210 or lsp@lakesunapee.org.

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New Technology to Help Save Aging Baboosic Lake

Old and failing sewage disposal systems can discharge phosphorus, bacteria, and other pollutants into nearby water bodies. Phosphorus is a nutrient that is associated with increased algal growth, which contributes to *eutrophication*, or lake “aging.” Baboosic Lake is showing signs of accelerated lake aging and is classified as borderline early eutrophic. In 1999, DES determined that 43 percent of the more than 200 waterfront homes on Baboosic Lake had disposal systems that exceeded their designed life span. The Baboosic Lake Association and the Town of Amherst are aiming to address this problem, and have joined together to install a community septic system using grant money from DES.

One area identified as having a high density of compromised septic systems was on the lake’s west side. The town explored the possibility of installing a system that could service multiple houses along the lake. After conducting field investigations, sending out survey questionnaires, and evaluating sewage disposal alternatives, CLD Consulting Engineers submitted a report to the town that recommended using an Enviro-Septic community sewage disposal system. This is a cluster system, which is an innovative, cost-effective system that can collect and treat sewage from many homes around a lake or other environmentally sensitive area. It also turned out that the town owned a 1.5-acre vacant parcel nearby that was just the right size for this kind of cluster system.

The Town of Amherst was awarded a DES Watershed Restoration Grant in 2002 to study how many homes could be part of a cluster sewage disposal system in this location. The resulting design included plans to connect homes in three phases, each servicing eight three-bedroom homes for a total of 24 homes. Furthermore, with pre-treatment of sewage, the total number of serviced homes could double to 48 homes.

According to Carl Weber, the Amherst Town Administrator, the Baboosic Lake community septic system project will benefit the lake while providing a cost-effective method for providing sewage disposal to area homes. Instead of spending more than \$10,000 for a replacement septic system, homeowners can connect to the community septic system for approximately \$3,800 each. Community feedback and town support for the current and future community septic projects has been outstanding.

The total cost of the project, scheduled for construction this spring, is estimated at approximately \$166,555. DES provided \$118,352 in grant funds and the Town of Amherst is providing the remaining costs through cash and in-kind services.

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For more information about the Baboosic Lake project, contact Andy Chapman at (603)271-5334 or achapman@des.state.nh.us.

Jillian Jones New Grants Specialist

First, the bad news: sadly, Matt Wood, has left his position in the Watershed Assistance Section as Nonpoint Source Specialist in charge of grant agreements. The good news is that Jillian Jones has become his able replacement.

Jillian joins us from the DES New Hampshire Geological Survey where she worked as an environmental technician, managing the New Hampshire Private Well Inventory and conducting ground water level monitoring. Her experi-



Jillian Jones (right) doing a mussel survey in Firth of Thames, Kaiaua, New Zealand.

ence also includes working as an intern in the DES Biology Section doing water quality monitoring and analysis and lake surveys, field-work for the Southeast New Hampshire Mercury Study, and creating the DES publication, *Innovative Stormwater Treatment Technologies BMP Manual*. After graduation from the University of New Hampshire with a B.S. in Environmental Conservation and Water Resource Management, she continued to intern in the DES Rivers Management and Protection Program.

Jillian also brings environmental experience from around the

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DES Helps to Usher in New Federal Stormwater Regulation

by Andrea Donlon, Nonpoint Source Specialist

It has been 30 years since the passage of the Clean Water Act, and water quality has improved all across the country. Nevertheless, degraded water bodies still exist. A leading source of impairment is polluted runoff, or *nonpoint source pollution*. In early March, a new federal stormwater regulation went into effect requiring stormwater management programs to improve water quality. The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Stormwater Phase II program regulates small municipal separate storm sewer systems (called MS4s), certain municipally-owned industrial activities, and small construction sites. All three groups must implement programs and practices to control polluted stormwater runoff.

The Phase II stormwater program is administered in New Hampshire by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Although DES does not have regulatory authority for NPDES programs, DES is assisting EPA in implementing this regulation by offering technical assistance and educational training sessions. This article describes the general requirements of the Phase II rule and gives a brief summary of activities that the DES Watershed Assistance Section has been working on.

Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4s). Phase II regulates MS4s that are located in urbanized areas as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau. This includes 45 communities in southern and coastal New Hampshire (see sidebar). Most regulated MS4s have only part of



Stenciling projects such as this help to meet outreach and education requirements for Phase II.

their community in an urbanized area, and there are several towns in the state that have received waivers because the population within their urbanized area is so small. Regulated municipalities must develop and implement a stormwater management program designed to reduce the discharge of pollutants from stormwater runoff. This stormwater management program must include the following six minimum control measures:

- Public education and outreach
- Public participation and involvement
- Illicit discharge detection and elimination
- Construction site runoff control
- Post-construction runoff control
- Pollution prevention and good housekeeping

Because the first two minimum control measures involve getting the word out to the public, you may start hearing about runoff pollution more often over the next several years if you live in one of the towns listed. Some of these measures may also require extra funding, which can present an additional strain on limited town and city budgets.

N.H. Communities with MS4s

Most of the communities listed here lie partially within an urbanized area. Those that include the entire municipality are in **bold**. The communities that were able to receive a waiver from the requirements have an asterisk (*) next to them.

Amherst	Londonderry
Atkinson	Madbury*
Auburn	Manchester
Bedford	Merrimack
Brentwood*	Milford
Chester*	Milton
Danville	Nashua
Derry	New Castle
Dover	Newington*
Durham	Newton
East Kingston*	No. Hampton
Exeter	Pelham
Goffstown	Plaistow
Greenland	Portsmouth
Hampstead	Rochester
Hampton	Rollinsford
Hampton Falls*	Rye
Hollis	Salem
Hooksett	Sandown
Hudson	Seabrook
Kingston	Somersworth
Lee*	Windham
Litchfield	

Municipally-owned industrial activities. In addition to the above requirements, Phase II regulates stormwater discharges associated with industrial activities owned or operated by a municipality, such as transfer stations and school bus fleet maintenance areas, *regardless of the size or location of the municipality*. Municipalities with such facilities must obtain a permit or a no-exposure waiver from EPA. If they obtain a permit, they must prepare and implement a stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP). The SWPPP must include best manage-

ment practices to reduce runoff pollution. Municipally-owned power plants, airports, and uncontrolled sanitary landfills are already regulated under Phase I.

Construction sites. As of March 10, 2003, construction activity that disturbs one or more acre of land, including activities conducted

USEPA recently named New Hampshire's NPDES Phase II website the best in the nation!

by a municipality, will need a permit. "Construction activity" means clearing, grading, excavation and other land disturbance activities related to projects such as landscaping, demolition, and building homes,

office buildings, factories, roads, etc. If a work site creates less than one acre of disturbance, but is part of a larger "common plan of development or sale" totaling more than one acre of disturbance, a permit is needed. It is important to note that the threshold is for *total disturbance*. The areas of disturbance do not need to be contiguous to be included in the calculation of total disturbance.

Watershed Assistance Section (WAS) Activities. In early January, DES unveiled a new Phase II website designed to help people in New Hampshire navigate their way through the Phase II requirements. It can be found at www.des.state.nh.us/stormwater. Barbara McMillan created the site with input from DES, EPA, DOT, and the UNH Technology Transfer Center (UNH-T²). The website lists contact people for each of the requirements, links to other resources, and includes descriptions of the requirements in greater detail.

In January and February, Andrea Donlon organized three workshops for municipal employees to explain one of the six minimum control measures for the MS4 permit. Illicit discharge detection and elimination workshops were held in Dover, Epping, and Manchester. The workshops in Dover and Epping were made possible with funding from the New Hampshire Estuaries Project (NHEP). The latter workshop was co-hosted by UNH Technology Transfer Center. DES staff Rob Livingston, Jeff Andrews, Sharon Ducharme, and Andrea Donlon all made presentations at these workshops.

A Most Deserved Recognition: *Michele Tremblay Wins National River Heroes Award*

In celebration of rivers and those who protect them, the Rivers Network honored Michele Tremblay, local volunteer and Chair of the Upper Merrimack River Local Advisory Committee, with the National River Heroes Award. Michele was one of five recipients across the country and the only person in New Hampshire to receive this nationally recognized award. While the other four recipients were recognized for their professional accomplishments associated with their full-time jobs, Michele was the only volunteer to receive recognition for her work on rivers. In addition to providing leadership and inspiration to watershed management throughout New Hampshire, Michele was recognized for her dedication and innovative strategies and techniques to achieve results to improve the Merrimack River and its watershed.

Just to name a few of Michele's accomplishments with the Merrimack River: Michele works with volunteers to manage one of the most ambitious river monitor-

The City of Rochester used a nonpoint source local initiatives grant through DES to make a stormwater education video as part of their Phase II MS4 requirements. They teamed up with other coastal towns and cities to form the New Hampshire Seacoast Stormwater Coalition, and this group decided on the content of the video. The resulting 30-minute film is a wonderful resource that can be played on local cable access channels or in schools or libraries. DES has sent a copy to all regulated MS4s in New Hampshire. For more information, contact Barbara McMillan at 271-7889 or bmcmillan@des.state.nh.us.



Michele Tremblay collecting micro-invertebrates with a rockbasket.

ing programs in the country, the Upper Merrimack Monitoring Program (UMMP), which focuses on a biological assessment of the river using macroinvertebrates as river quality indicators. She created the popular workshop, "Bug Nights," at which volunteers gather in a laboratory setting to learn to identify and sort macroinvertebrates collected during sampling. Michele constantly searches for funding through grant proposals for monitoring, education, supplies and materials, and created the innovative "Adopt-A-Site" program where area businesses sponsor an UMMP

Tremblay, continued on page 7

New Technique Used for Tracking Sources of Pollution in Hampton Harbor

by Natalie Landry, Coastal Watershed Supervisor

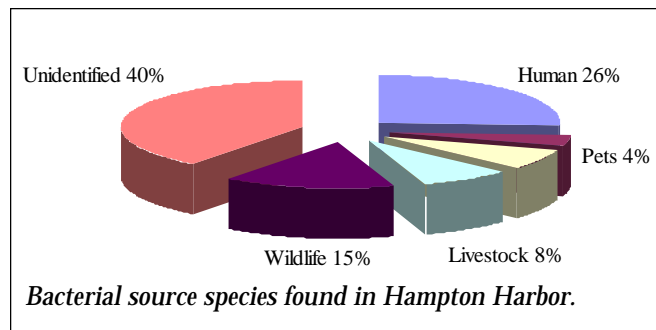
What do the following have in common: geese, dogs, septic systems, wastewater treatment plants and cows? They can all be a source of bacterial pollution. Bacterial contamination of lakes, rivers and estuaries is a concern because people can be exposed to disease-causing bacteria and viruses while swimming, boating, or consuming shellfish. A big problem in trying to reduce bacteria pollution is figuring out where the bacteria come from. Thanks to funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the N.H. Estuaries Project, tracking down these sources of pollution has just become easier.

Using a forensic technique, scientists are able to match the bacteria found in the water to the bacteria from specific animals, including humans.

This high tech approach to finding bacterial pollution became popular in the Chesapeake Bay re-

netic codes taken from each strain of bacteria that tend to be particular to each host species. A library of DNA fingerprints was the result. Dr. Simmons found that the bacteria in the Bay matched the fingerprint or code of bacteria from deer and raccoons. After managing for wildlife, the bacteria levels in the Bay dropped and the shellfish beds opened for harvesting.

Closer to home, scientists at the University of New Hampshire are creating a DNA library of bacteria sources in the New Hampshire Seacoast. Using the DNA library, a recent study in Hampton Harbor showed that bacteria from humans, wildlife, birds and pets were found throughout the year in the Harbor. Human bacteria were found to be the largest source of bacteria that scientists could match to the sources in the DNA library. DES is working with the communities in the Hampton Harbor watershed to identify the possible sources of human bacteria and eliminate them from Harbor waters.



gion where Dr. George Simmons from Virginia Tech collected fecal samples from humans, pets, and wildlife. The sleuthing professor cultured the bacteria from the fecal material and created a library of ge-

Hampton and Seabrook are diligently addressing these sources. Seabrook constructed a state-of-the-art wastewater treatment facility in the late 1990s and Hampton recently passed a bond to replace the



UNH lab technician conducting a step in the DNA analysis.

sewer pipes in the Hampton Beach area. To cut down on discharges from boats, DES purchased a pumpout boat that is now available to pump wastewater out of boats anywhere in New Hampshire marine waters. The boat makes it more convenient for boaters to dispose of their wastewater after a day of fun in the Harbor.

Maine is also using DNA fingerprinting for figuring out the pollution sources in the Webhannet River watershed in Wells, Maine. Volunteer monitors are regularly collecting water samples from streams that flow into the bay and transporting these samples to UNH for DNA analysis. If you want to check out this project on the web, go to www.umseagrant-mst.org.

If you are interested in reading about the Hampton Harbor study, check out the report on the DES website at www.des.state.nh.us/wmb/was/investigations.htm. For information about the DNA technology, contact Dr. Steve Jones at the University of New Hampshire at (603) 862-2175 or shj@cisunix.unh.edu, or Natalie Landry, DES, at (603) 433-0877 or nlandry@des.state.nh.us. To learn more about the DES pumpout boat and other pumpout facilities, please go to www.des.state.nh.us/wmb/cva/.

DES Awards \$664,667 in Watershed Assistance Grants

The DES Watershed Assistance Section awarded 24 Nonpoint Source Local Initiative and Watershed Restoration grants to local watershed organizations. The grant awards total \$664,667; when combined with matching funds from the applicants, the total value of projects is over \$1 million! We are very happy to be able to support so many groups doing great things to improve the state's water quality.

From a new bathhouse and drainage management at Veasey Park in Deerfield to an Ossipee Lake water quality monitoring program with the Green Mountain Conservation Group, a variety of exciting projects received funding. The smallest award, \$7,800 will be used to prepare final designs for an innovative community septic system on Baboosic Lake in Amherst (see related article on page 3). The largest grant, \$77,312 went to the UNH Cooperative Extension in Grafton County to fund the second phase of a demonstration riparian buffer project on Connecticut River cropland. This stage of the project will include training programs aimed at educating farmers and landowners about the economic and environmental benefits of installing and maintaining buffers.

Requests for proposals for Watershed Assistance Grants are mailed each fall to municipalities, nonprofit organizations, regional planning agencies, conservation districts and commissions and state agencies. Funding can be used for a variety of water quality projects to improve water quality or prevent pollution of valuable water resources.

Contact Eric Williams for more information at 271-2358 or ewilliams@des.state.nh.us.

Fiscal Year 2003 Local Initiative Grant Recipients		
Applicant	Project Title	Grant \$
NPS Local Initiative Projects		
Lake Sunapee Protective Assoc.	Sunapee Roadways NPS Reduction - Phase II	\$37,249
Lake Winnepesaukee Assoc.	Tributary Monitoring in the Winnepesaukee Watershed	\$18,106
Veasey Park Commission	New Bathhouse and Drainage Management at Veasey Park, Deerfield	\$25,000
UNH Coop in Grafton County	Riparian Buffer Project, Part II	\$77,312
UNH Cooperative Extension in Grafton County	Development and Implementation of Nutrient Management Plans - Year 2	\$40,000
The Green Mountain Conservation Group	Ossipee Lake Protection Project	\$17,000
NH Municipal Association	Local Motor Vehicle Salvage Facility Regulation: A Handbook for Municipal Officials	\$16,474
Town of Lisbon	Lisbon NPS Local Initiative - The Ammonoosuc River	\$20,250
The Nature Conservancy of NH	Ashuelot River Watershed Land Conservation Plan	\$17,480
Belknap County Conservation District	Center Harbor Bay Subwatershed Evaluation for Stormwater Management & NPS Reduction from the Village Area	\$21,519
Town of Newbury	Gillingham Drive Stormwater Management Improvements - Phase II	\$17,350
Granite State Designers & Installers Association	Seminars/Workshops to Observe Septic Aging, Soil Identification, and Analysis	\$13,925
Restoration Projects		
Town of Strafford	Bog Brook Restoration Project	\$13,122
Town of Warren	Baker River Restoration Project	\$13,677
City of Portsmouth	Peirce Island Phase II	\$48,000
Manchester Conservation Comm.	Crystal Lake Water Quality Improvement Projects	\$73,482
Trout Unlimited	Pemigewasset River Restoration Plan	\$14,038
Belknap County Conservation District	Reducing Nutrient Loading to Hunkins Pond from Swain Farm	\$51,130
Nashua Regional Planning Commission	Souhegan River Watershed Management Plan	\$21,000
Balmoral Improvement Assoc.	Middle Brook Canal Dredging Project	\$51,126
Town of Amherst	Baboosic Lake Community Wastewater Disposal System - Design Phase 1 and 3	\$7,800
Town of Wolfeboro	Whitten Neck Road - Smith River Design and Construct Stormwater Collection, Treatment and Disposal System	\$10,800
Breezy Point Condominium Association	Breezy Point Shoreline Stabilization	\$11,300
Town of Thornton	Mill Brook Restoration Project	\$27,527
TOTAL		\$664,667

Tremblay

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monitoring site.

In what was an overwhelming accomplishment for New Hampshire rivers beyond the Merrimack, Michele spearheaded the effort to introduce a bill to bring the state's designated rivers back under the Shoreland Protection Act in order to have the same level of protection afforded to other water bodies in the state. The bill passed, and the Upper Merrimack River corridor and several other New Hampshire

designated rivers are now protected under the Shoreland Protection Act.

Congratulations Michele!

For more information about the Rivers Network, visit www.rivernetnetwork.org/index.cfm.

Check Out These Events!

Watershed Partnerships Course

Estuaries Expo

2003 State of the Estuaries Conference

Stormwater Management
In Cold Climates Conference

For more info: www.des.state.nh.us/workshops/calendar2.htm

Nashua

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laundry or sewage. If a pipe was wet and the flow was steady enough to at least partially fill a sample bottle, we collected a sample and had it analyzed for *E. coli* bacteria.

During the summer and fall of 2002, we investigated approximately 70 miles (92 percent) of Nashua's shoreline, and plan to complete the remaining six miles in 2003. We located a total of 311 out-fall pipes. Of those, 34 had enough flow to collect samples for analysis of *E. coli* bacteria. We identified one illicit connection during our survey. A toilet and sink in the boiler room building of a hospital was discharging into the storm drainage system. This pollution source has since been eliminated. Other follow-up work will continue this summer.

River levels last summer were low because of the drought, and this meant we could see lots of trash that had been dumped in the city's rivers and streams. In the Nashua River alone, we counted 79 shopping carts, 52 bicycles, 15 tires, and miscellaneous items including a lawn mower, a snowblower, a wheel chair, a barbeque grill, and two swing sets. Clearly, there is a need for river cleanups and perhaps more accessible waste disposal options. We have met with City Year volunteers to help organize a cleanup to remove some of this debris in the fall of 2003 if possible.

Despite the trash, we were heartened to see so much wildlife on our tours. The rivers and streams are alive with fish, otters, muskrat, herons, turtles, and, of course, insects. We hope our efforts will make the waterways of Nashua a bit cleaner for the critters who inhabit them, and for humans, too!

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world. Having participated for four months in the service oriented field studies program, EcoQuest, in New Zealand, she has some special insights into a country that focuses resources on maintaining environmental quality.

After only a few months on the job, Jillian has brought herself up to speed on grant agreements and has navigated through several bureaucratic contract processes with style and grace. If you have any questions about your existing or future grant paperwork, contact Jillian at (603) 271-8475 or jjones@des.state.nh.us.

As for Matt Wood, he did not go too far from us. He is now enjoying his days working for Chris Nash at the Shellfish program in the DES coastal office. Matt can often be found on a boat, monitoring our coastal waters to keep New Hampshire shellfish and shellfish consumers healthy and happy.

Small Education & Outreach Grants for Watershed Organizations Available for Second Year

The DES Watershed Assistance Section is offering Small Education and Outreach Grants for Watershed Organizations again this year. These grants are funded under section 319 of the Clean Water Act and are available on an ongoing basis with no deadlines. Grants are awarded for \$2,000 or less, require a 40 percent match, and are for education and/or outreach activities that help to maintain or improve water quality.

For more information, contact Barbara McMillan, DES Watershed Outreach Coordinator, (603) 271-7889 or bmcmillan@des.state.nh.us. For an application, visit www.des.state.nh.us/wmb/was/grants.htm and scroll down to the bottom of the page. Applications are accepted on a continuing basis.



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